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# QUABBIN

## Fishing Guide

Metropolitan District Commission  
Division of Watershed Management

942/260

Welcome to Quabbin Reservoir, the principle drinking water supply for 2.5 million Massachusetts residents in 46 communities. In addition to yielding drinking water of exceptional quality, Quabbin also offers some of the best fishing in the state.

Recent changes in federal laws governing public water supplies have placed greater attention on recreational activities at Quabbin. The Metropolitan District Commission operates the fishing program with environmental quality as its prime concern. Please help to preserve your fishing privileges and protect Quabbin's precious resources by following all Rules and Regulations. Thank you.

## Season

The Quabbin fishing season runs from the third weekend in April to the third weekend in October

## Fees

You must be 16 years or older, with a valid Mass. Fishing License to rent or launch a boat.

## Boat Rentals

Hourly rates vary depending on length of rental.

Rentals	Minimum	Maximum (8+ hours)	Deposit
Boat	\$2.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 7.00
Motor (incl. 3 gal. gas)	\$8.00	\$20.00	\$20.00
<hr/>			
Total	\$10.00	\$27.00	\$27.00

Senior Citizens (65 or older) Monday through Friday except holidays.

Rentals	Minimum	Maximum (8+ hours)	Deposit
Boat	\$1.00	\$ 3.50	\$ 3.50
Motor (incl. 3 gal. gas)	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
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Total	\$5.00	\$13.50	\$13.50

## Parking/Launching

Parking: Per vehicle: \$4.00 Senior Citizen: \$2.00  
Private Boat Launch Per person: \$2.00 Senior Citizen: \$1.00  
(Senior rate Monday through Friday except holidays)

## Boat Size and Occupancy Limits

- All boats, canoes and jon boats must be at least 12 feet long. Canoes and jon boats can not be launched on the main body of the reservoir, but may be launched on Pottapaug Pond above the Regulating Dam at Area 3, Gate 43 in Hardwick, and above the Regulating Dam at Area 2, Gate 31 in New Salem. All launching fees apply and boats must be checked in with MDC fishing area attendants prior to launching.
- No boats may carry more than four persons, and boats under 14 feet, 6 inches are limited to three persons.
- No canoe or jon boat may carry more than three persons, and canoes under 16 feet and jon boats under 14 feet, 6 inches are limited to two persons.

## **Outboard Motor Size Limits**

- MDC rental boats are limited to 10 horsepower maximum. Private boats are limited 1/2 the BIA or OBC horsepower rating of the boat up to 20 horsepower.
- Private boats may use two motors provided the total combined horsepower does not exceed the above.
- 25 horsepower motors restricted to 20 horsepower are not allowed.

## **Regulations for Boating and Shore Fishing**

### **Sanitary Regulations**

The following are PROHIBITED:

- Acts which pollute the water supply
- Disposal of any materials in the reservoir or reservation
- Landing of boats on shoreline or islands except at designated areas
- Swimming or wading
- Alcoholic beverages
- Fires
- Dogs or other animals
- Boating beyond marked limits
- Motors larger than 20 horsepower.

### **Safety Regulations**

- Boats must be operated at a safe and reasonable speed
- Boats must be returned at posted times
- Persons under 16 must be accompanied by an adult when in a boat
- No more than four persons may occupy a boat. Boats under 14 feet, 6 inches are limited to three persons
- Boats must be a minimum of 12 feet and in compliance with state boating laws.

### **Shore Fishing Regulations**

The following are PROHIBITED:

- Fires of any kind
- Obstruction of gates
- Entering restricted areas
- Night fishing without Night Access Permit.

### **Other MDC Regulations\***

- Assemblies of more than 25 persons must have a permit from the MDC
- Fishing derbies or any kind of gambling are prohibited
- Other restrictions may apply to boats, motors, or occupancy.  
Contact Commission staff for further information.

\*Violation of these regulations are punishable by a \$500.00 fine or by imprisonment for not more than one year. Rule violations may result in the loss of fishing privileges.  
(Mass. General Laws, Chapter 92, Section 22)

# **Fishing Boat Launch Areas**

To rent or launch a boat, one occupant of each boat must possess a valid Mass. Fishing License. All persons 15 or older who are fishing, must possess a valid license. Private boats must be properly registered in compliance with state laws. Persons under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Boat and motor restrictions apply (see page 2).

## **Boat Launching Area #1**

Gate 8 in Pelham, off Route 202, 4 miles north of the intersection with Route 9. This area is considered prime area for coldwater fish such as trout and salmon.

## **Boat Launching Area #2**

Gate 31 in New Salem, off Route 122, just south of the intersection with Route 202. This area provides a great variety of warmwater fish in addition to trout and salmon.

## **Boat Launching Area #3**

Gate 43 in Hardwick off Greenwich Road, west of 32A. This area also offers excellent warmwater fishing.

## **Canoe Fishing**

Permitted with a valid fishing license above the horseshoe dams at Pottapaug Pond, Gate 43 and Gate 31. All fees apply. Canoes must be checked in with the MDC fishing area attendant before launching. Both areas have chain pickerel, largemouth bass, and a variety of other warmwater fish.

## **Boat Launching and Rentals**

Boat Launching Areas are open from 6:00 a.m. to one hour before sunset, seven days a week from mid-April to mid-October. Return times will be posted daily (opening and closing times may vary due to weather conditions). Boats are rented on a first-come, first-serve basis.

## **Shore Fishing Access**

For those not intending to launch boats, access to the reservation is available to all non-restricted areas. Shore fishing is allowed only along designated shorelines from mid-April to mid-October. Parking at gates is limited and vehicles must not block gates. Vehicles found parked in front of gates will be towed at the owner's expense. Shore fishing is allowed at Boat Launch Areas, but parking fees apply. Night fishing is permitted only at Gates 16, 31, 35, 41, and 43, and a valid Night Access Permit is required. Call the Quabbin Visitor Center for further details (413) 323-7221.

LEGEND



Off-limit



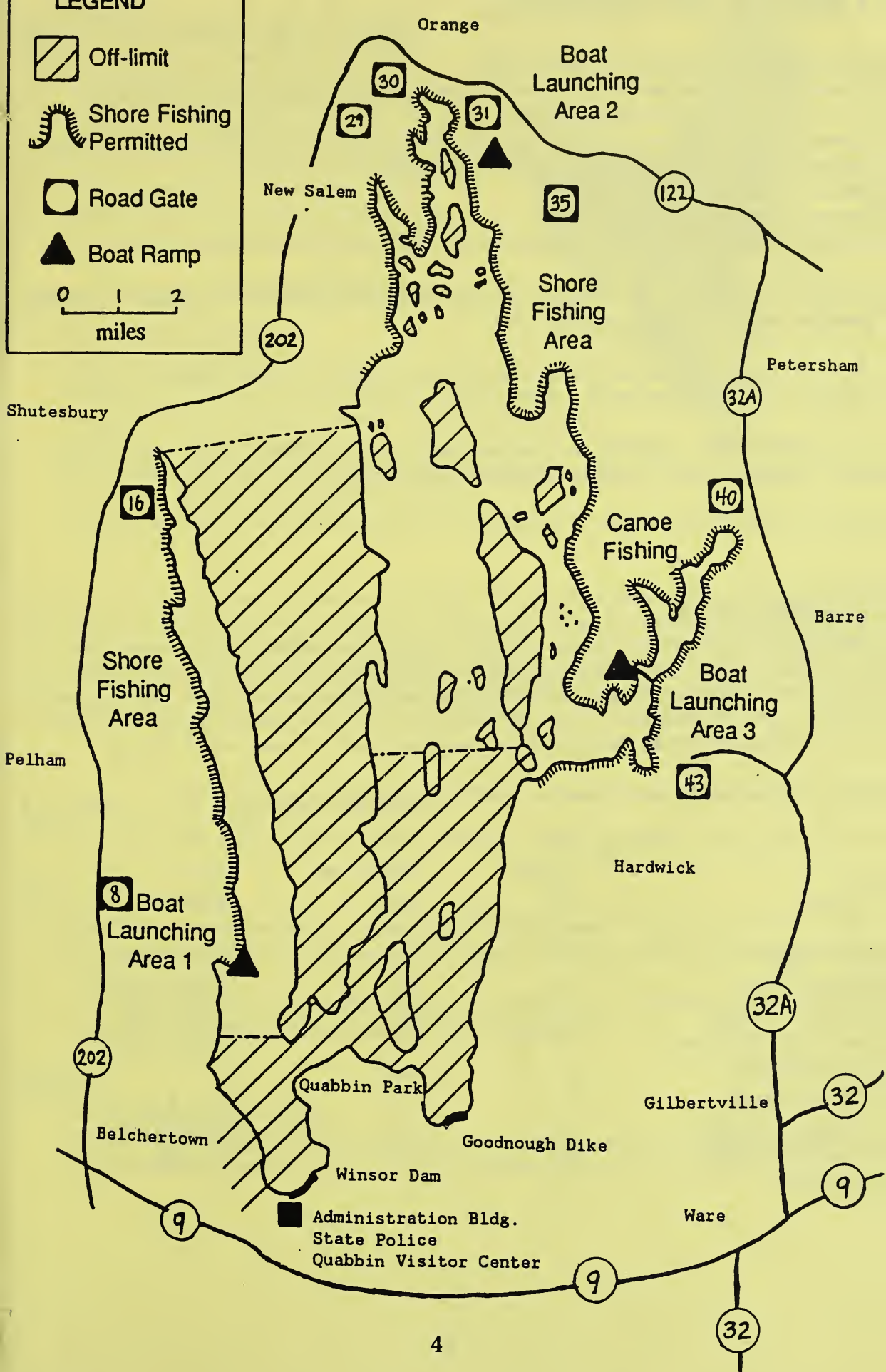
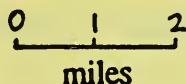
Shore Fishing Permitted



Road Gate



Boat Ramp



# Camping and Picnicking

**Lake Dennison State Park (518) 939-8962**

Route 202, Winchendon. Fifty campsites, fishing, boating, hunting, and swimming.

**Otter River State Forest (508) 939-8962**

Route 202, Winchendon. One hundred-eighteen campsites, fishing, hunting, swimming.

**Federated Women's Club State Forest (508) 939-8962**

Route 122, Pelham. Four campsites.

**Erving State Forest (508) 544-3939**

Route 2, Erving. Twenty-eight campsites, fishing, boating, swimmig, and hunting.

For more information on state park camping call (617) 727-3180. For more information on private campgrounds call (617) 727-3201.

Bait and tackle shops are located near Boat Launch Areas #1 and #3, and in Pelham, Orange, Athol and Ware areas.

Accomodations are available near the three Boat Launch Areas in Orange, Athol, Ware and Amherst areas and near the turnpike access in Granby and Chicopee.

## Fishing Facts

Quabbin's fishery is comprised of both coldwater species (salmonids and smelt) and warmwater species (bass, pickerel, perch, and bullheads). Most of the deep coldwater occurs on Quabbin's west arm, accessible from Gate 8 (Boat Launch Area #1). Deep water fishing is also available on the main part of the reservoir, but water accessible from Gate 31 (Area #2) and Gate 43 (Area #3) is shallower and better for warmwater fishing.

Bait: Live bait can be used; however, smelt bait is legal only after May 15th.

Species	Creel No.	Minimum Size	State Record
Lake Trout	2	18"	22 lbs. 10 oz.
Brown Trout	2	18"	19 lbs. 10 oz.
Rainbow Trout	5	---	13 lbs. 0 oz.
Landlocked Salmon	2	18"	10 lbs. 2 oz.
All Salmonids	5	---	---
Chain Pickerel	5	15"	9 lbs. 5 oz.
Largemouth Bass	5	12"	15 lbs. 8 oz.
Smallmouth Bass	5	12"	8 lbs. 2 oz.
All Others	---	---	---

## Quabbin Loons and Eagles

The common loon and the bald eagle, both symbols of the wild, are uncommon nesting birds in Massachusetts. In fact, Quabbin is one of the few places in the state where loons and eagles are known to consistently nest. These birds can easily be disturbed during the nesting season, however, and many abandon their nest if approached too closely.



## Please Help Protect Our Loons and Eagles

- Stay well away from nest sites
- Read and obey notices posted at Boat Launch Areas
- Respect "Wildlife Research Areas" as posted with signs or marked with red buoys
- Steer boats away from swimming loons or perched eagles
- Do not land boats on islands or shorelines
- Remember that both loons and eagles are protected by state and federal laws which are strictly enforced.

Dispose of fishing line and lead sinkers properly. Loons and eagles can become entangled in monofilament fishing line and wire leaders. Line and leaders have been found in Quabbin bald eagle nests and could kill young eagles. Loons have died from lead poisoning after swallowing lead sinkers. Please put tangled monofilament line in your pocket or tackle box and dispose of properly. Use non-toxic weights and sinkers instead of lead.

## Quabbin - A Unique Place

Scenic beauty, water and abundant wildlife resources make Quabbin a very special place.

### But remember...

- Quabbin is a drinking water supply for 2.5 million people
- Its continued purity and beauty depend upon careful and considerate use of the land and water
- Access is a privilege that carries with it a responsibility to know and obey rules and regulations established to protect Quabbin's integrity.

### Please...

- Do not abuse this privilege
- Help keep Quabbin clean and preserve our privilege to use this unique resource
- Report violators to the State Police - Quabbin Barracks at (413) 323-7561.

# Quabbin... A Unique Resource With Many Values

Quabbin Reservoir is one of the largest human-made domestic water supplies in the United States. Created in the 1930's by the construction of two huge earthen dams, the reservoir is fed by the three branches of the Swift River, and seasonally by the Ware River. It remains a great engineering feat, and is one of the largest unfiltered water supplies in the world.

In order to flood the vast area of the Swift River Valley, 2,500 people, the entire population of Dana, Prescott, Enfield, and Greenwich, had to be relocated. Hundreds of homes, businesses, a state highway, a railroad line, and 34 cemeteries were also moved or dismantled.

The reservoir was named Quabbin, after a Native American word for "the place or meeting of many waters". This valley, once a plain with numerous ponds and rivers, and later a busy farming valley and resort area, is now the site of the principal supply of pure drinking water for 2.5 million people in 46 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. About two-thirds of the Swift River Watershed is owned by the Commonwealth and managed by the Metropolitan District Commission's Division of Watershed Management. The Division also maintains numerous dams, buildings, roads and recreational sites.

Quabbin's water covers 39 square miles. The reservoir is 18 miles long and has 181 miles of shoreline including 61 miles along the reservoir's 60 islands. Quabbin collects as run-off an average of one-half of the water that falls as rain or snow on the watershed. When full, Quabbin holds 412 billion gallons of water.

The Division of Watershed Management's mandate is to "utilize and conserve said water and other natural resources in order to protect, preserve and enhance the environment of the Commonwealth and to assure the availability of pure water for future generations". To accomplish this goal, the Division manages its watershed lands for water quality by maintaining a healthy and diverse forest cover. Quabbin also provides a unique site for important scientific research on water quality and wildlife topics.

For more information on the history, wildlife and management of the reservoir and watershed lands, come to the MDC Quabbin Visitors Center at Winsor Dam in Belchertown, open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and weekends from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or call (413) 323-7221.

Other important numbers:

State Police - Quabbin Barracks (413) 323-7561

Quabbin Administration Building (413) 323-6921

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Metropolitan District Commission  
Division of Watershed Management**

*William F. Weld, Governor*

*Argeo Paul Cellucci, Lt. Governor*

*Trudy Cox, Secretary, EOEA*

*M. Ilyas Bhatti, Commissioner, MDC*